



March 8, 2016

*Marine Fisheries*  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Core Sound Leasing Proposal



# *Core Sound Oyster Leasing*



The N.C. General Assembly's 2015 Session, Section 14.8 of Session Law 2015-241 instructs the Division of Marine Fisheries to develop a proposal to open to shellfish cultivation leasing certain areas of Core Sound that are currently subject to a moratorium on shellfish leasing.



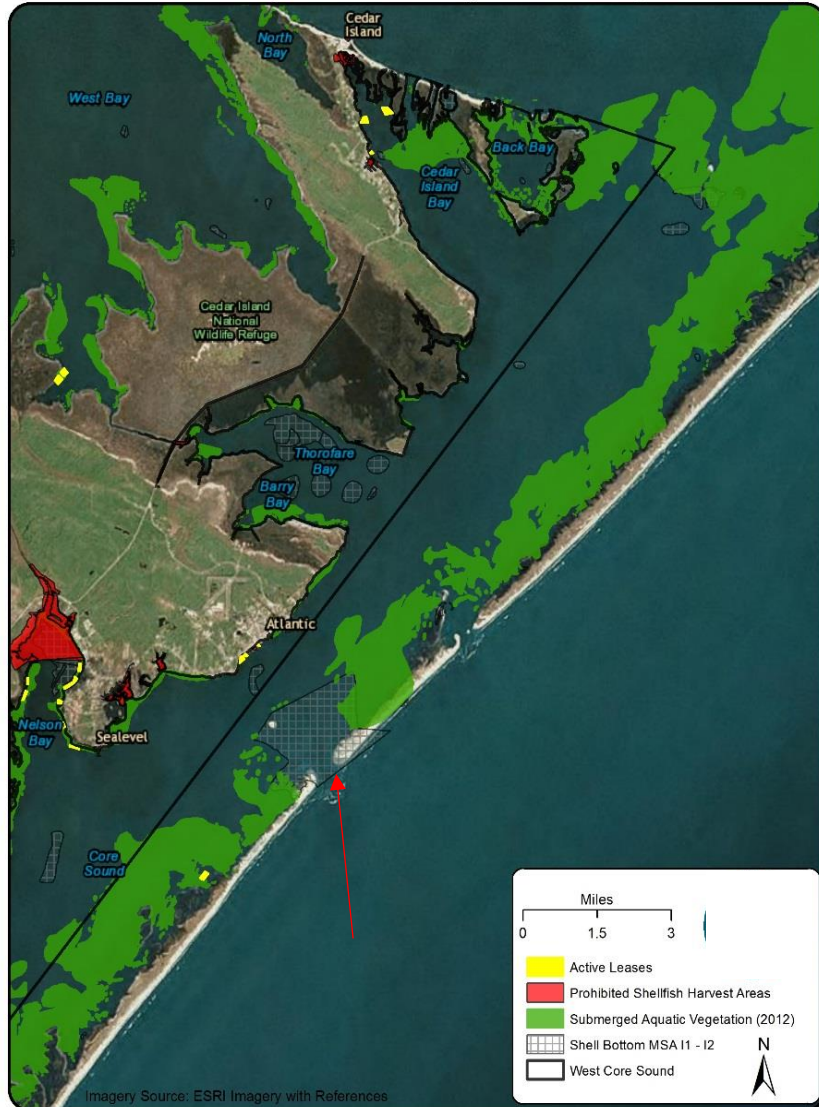
- Initial Lease moratorium went into effect in 1993
  - numerous reasons
- Subsequent moratoriums or amendments by the NCGA in 1995, 1997
- Final moratorium in 2003
- Western Core Sound:
  - Approx. 36,000 acres
  - 2003 – 33 leases/92 acres
  - 2016 – 25 leases/62 acres
- Eastern Core Sound:
  - Approx. 30,000 acres
  - 2003 – 1 lease/7 acres
  - 2016 – same



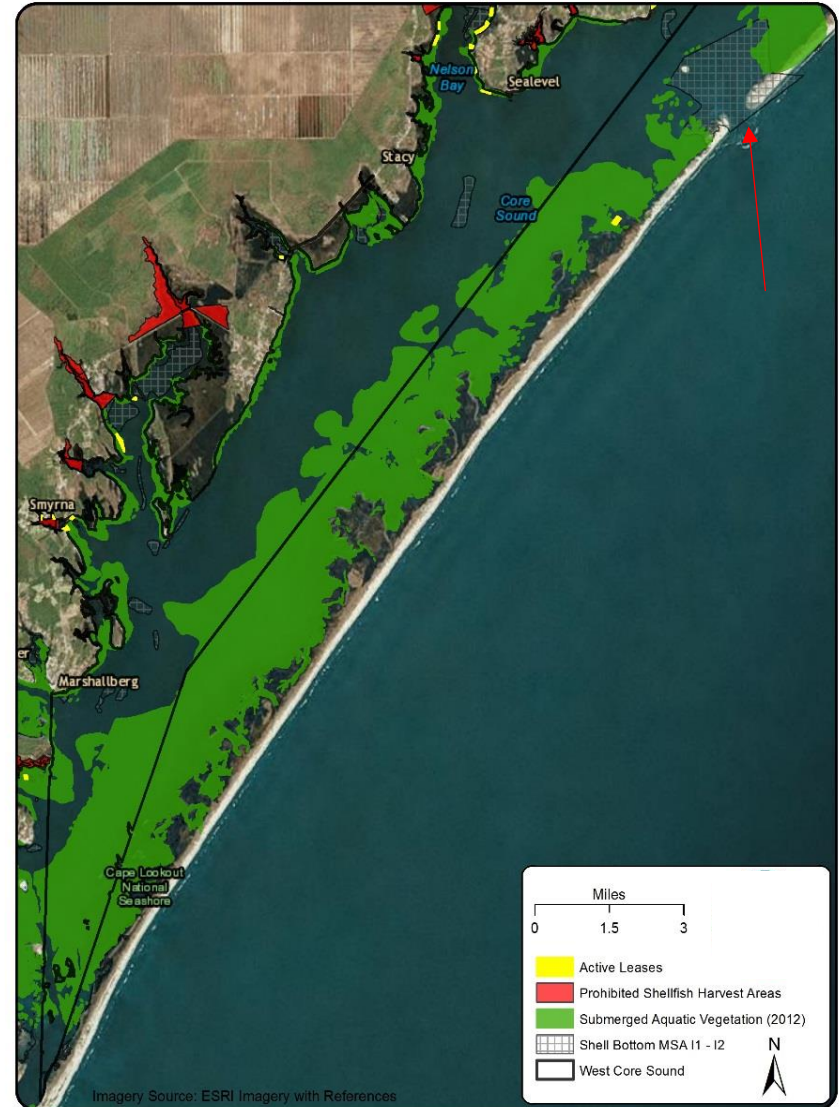


# Suitability

Northern Core Sound (Western Boundary Established by Law 2003-64)



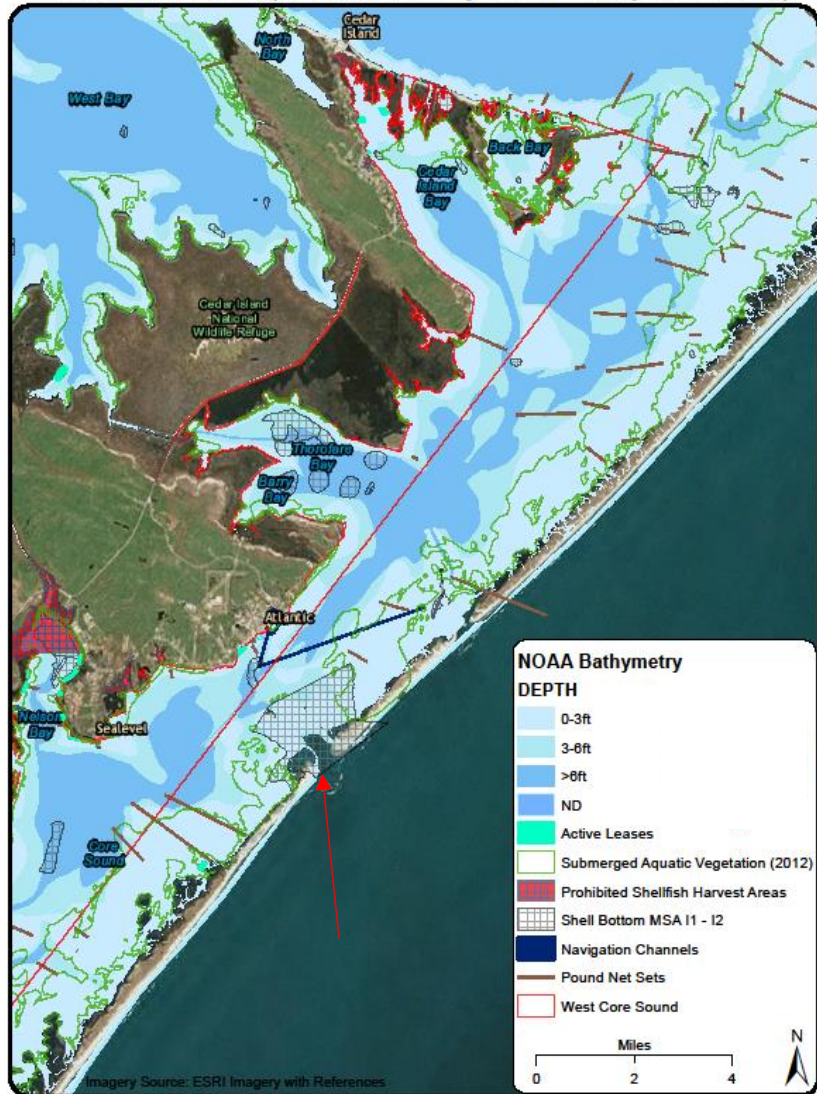
Southern Core Sound (Western Boundary Established by Law 2003-64)



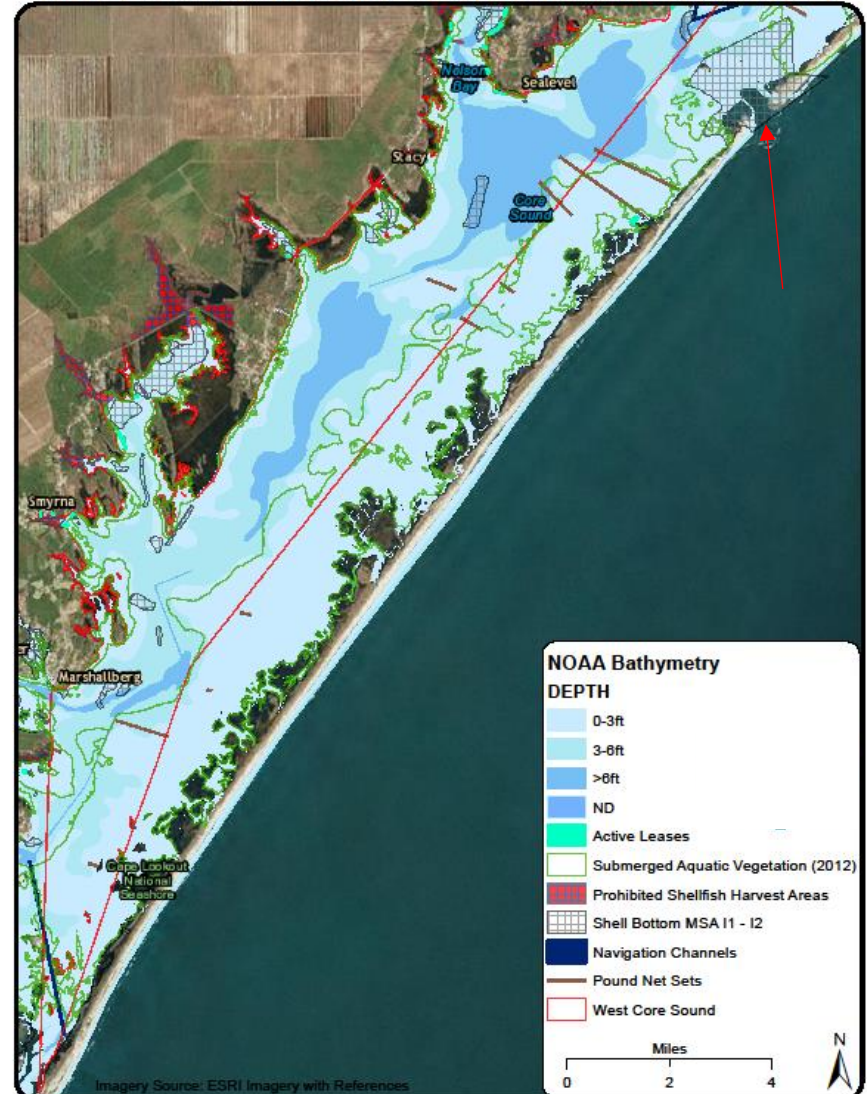


# Suitability

Northern Core Sound (Western Boundary Established by Law 2003-64)



Southern Core Sound (Western Boundary Established by Law 2003-64)





- Consultations with stakeholders and experts
  - Carteret County Fisheries Association
  - N.C. Shellfish Growers Association leadership
  - N.C. Sea Grant
  - National Ocean Survey Centers for Coastal Ocean Science
- Look at current production on existing leases in Core Sound
- Start small and build organically with consensus and local support
- Outreach and extension important



- These recommendations are not finalized until April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline

Year One Only	Year Two and Subsequent Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applications for new leases</li><li>• Western Core Sound only</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shellfish/Crustacean Advisory Committee</li><li>• Recommendations to the Marine Fisheries Commission</li><li>• Industry and local representation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30 acre max to get back to 2003 acreage</li><li>• 3-5 acre maximum per lease (need additional input)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Division provides committee overall Core Sound shellfish lease statistics (harvest, planting, compliance percentage, etc.) to gauge success</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow 2003 lease footprints</li><li>• Exempt lease footprints from natural shellfish requirement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marine Fisheries Commission directs division on new lease acreage allowed for following year including any acreage restrictions</li></ul>

# *Factors to Consider*



- Core Sound Leasing
  - 25 percent delinquency for rent
  - Non production issues on several leases
  - 1/3 acreage reduction since 2003
- Intensive Culture Leases
  - Millions of cultured oysters and clams
  - Successful operations
- Benefits of Shellfish Leases
  - Water filtration benefits entire sound and fisheries
  - Jobs
  - Working options for commercial fishermen





# Questions

